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# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

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## Livestock Numbers At New Low

Livestock numbers dropped last year to lowest level since '39. Numbers on farms and ranches have dropped yearly since all-time peak of January '44. Decline was somewhat more last year than in '45 and '46 but less than in '44. All kinds of livestock, chickens and turkeys were fewer at the end of the year than at the beginning...Slaughter and sale was encouraged by high priced meat and tight feed supplies. Work stock decline is part of the continued trend toward use of tractors.

In terms of animal units (excluding poultry) numbers January 1 were 4 percent below year earlier and 16 percent below the January '44 peak.

Cattle numbers decreased 2.6 million head—from 81.2 million January '47 to 78.6 million January '48. The '37-46 average was 74.8 million head.

Milk cows decreased almost a million—from 26 million January '47 to 25.2 million January '48. The '37-46 average was 26 million head.

Sheep liquidation continued, but more moderate than in any year since '42...Less on feed and less stock...Stock sheep numbers, smallest in 80 years, totaled 30.5 million; 32.1 in '47; 44.6 million '37-46 average. Sheep and lambs on feed totaled 4.8 million—16 percent drop from year ago; '37-46 average, 6.4 million head.

Heavy marketings in late '47 brought January hog numbers down 3 percent from year earlier despite the increase in '47 pig crop. Decrease was in hogs over 6 months old. Hogs on farms, 55 million; 56.9 January '47; 61.3 January '46; 59.2 January '37-46 average.

## Snow Cover Protects Wheat

For the most part, conditions in January favored 1948 crop prospects. Mild weather in December and early January gave winter wheat good growth in the southern Great Plains. And January snows usually preceded the cold waves to give wheat a protecting cover. Snow cover reached southward to lower Texas and Alabama. Most winter wheat areas were thus protected.

## Winter Truck May Top '47 By 6 Percent

Despite bad weather, winter truck will top year-ago production by about 6 percent. Earlier indicated, 11 percent increase over '47. Smaller crops than last year are indicated for artichokes, lima beans, snap beans, carrots, cauliflower, eggplant, kale, green peppers and tomatoes. Eggplant, peppers, peas and kale especially will be sharply reduced. Relatively plentiful supplies of beets, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, escarole, lettuce, shallots, and spinach are indicated for this winter. Spring crop vegetable acreage is about same as last year.

## Citrus Prospects, Good

Citrus production may be near record despite January freezes. Oranges, '47-48 season, estimated at 108.6 million boxes, will be 5 percent less than last season's big crop but 30 percent above average. Estimate includes 52.4 million boxes early and mid-season oranges and 56.2 million boxes Valencias, compared with 54.3 and 59.7 million, respectively, last season. Grapefruit crop is estimated at 62 million boxes compared with 59.5 million previous season. California lemon prospects fell off in January to 13.5 million boxes, a little below last season's crop.

## A Little Less Milk

Light feeding of high priced feed, plus winter weather, cut down on the January milk. There were fewer cows and they gave less milk per cow. Production of 8.4 billion pounds was smallest for the month since '41. But cows still were producing a little better than average... '37-46 average for January, 8.2 billion pounds. Feed concentrates averaged \$4.53 per hundred pounds, up \$1.39 from year earlier.

## Fewer Eggs—But Still Above Average

Egg production dropped 5 percent in January from a year ago. Number of layers was down 1 percent; rate of lay down 4

percent. But the 4.3 billion eggs laid in January were 31 percent more than '37-46 average. Decreases from year earlier ranged from 15 percent in the South Atlantic to 3 percent in the North Atlantic States. The West showed an 8 percent increase... practically no change in East North Central States.

Number of layers on U. S. farms in '47 averaged 3 percent below '46 but were 9 percent above 10-year average.

## Decrease in Prospective Layers

Potential layers (hens and pullets of laying age plus pullets not of laying age) February 1 totaled 408.3 million, only 1 percent fewer than year ago and 9 percent below '42-46 average. But there was a bigger decline in the younger pullets. Those not of laying age were about 6 percent less than year ago and 38 percent below the 5-year average. Also, farmers say they intend to buy about 20 percent fewer baby chicks this year than they bought in '47. But they may change their plans somewhat if egg-feed ratio turns favorable.

Egg prices dropped 10 cents dozen, month ending mid-January, while poultry ration increased 19 cents per 100 pounds... Eggs were up 18 percent above year ago; cost of poultry ration, up 47 percent.

## Smaller Turkey Crop Expected

Only 28.5 million turkeys are expected to be raised this year compared with about 34.7 million in '47. Growers indicate they are cutting down on account of unfavorable feed prices as related to turkey prices. Growers' returns indicate that the '48 crop will be smallest in 10 years.

## Wheat Stocks Relatively High

Stocks of wheat are relatively high, despite near record disappearance since July. Stored in all positions first of January—795 million bushels... Nearly a fourth larger than first of last year and a sixth larger than on January 1, '46. Except for the 4 years, '42 to '45, wheat stocks are larger than on January 1 of any other year of record.

Stocks on farms, 428 million bushels. At merchant mills, nearly 112 million. In interior mills, elevators and warehouses, nearly 111 million. At terminals, nearly 142 million. And Commodity Credit Corporation wheat in transit, 3.1 million bushels. Off-farm portion of total is nearly 368 million bushels, compared with 276 million January 1 last year and 321 million bushels same date in '46.

July-December disappearance—from the '47-48 wheat supply of nearly 1,449 million bushels—was about 653 million bushels...exceeded only once, namely, in '45.

## PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Dec. 15 1947	Jan. 15 1948	Jan. 15 1948
Wheat, bu. ....	2.79	2.81	2.22
Corn, bu. ....	2.37	2.46	1.61
Peanuts, lb. ....	10.1	10.1	12.0
Cotton, lb. ....	34.06	33.14	31.12
Potatoes, bu. ....	1.72	1.86	1.86
Hogs, 100 lb. ....	24.90	26.70	18.20
Beef cattle, 100 lb. ....	19.80	21.50	13.60
Veal calves, 100 lb. ....	22.30	24.40	16.90
Lambs, 100 lb. ....	21.30	22.20	14.80
Butterfat, lb. ....	87.7	87.7	1/68.6
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. ....	2/ 5.08	5.06	1/ 4.26
Chickens, live, lb. ....	25.2	26.3	28.6
Eggs, doz. ....	58.7	48.7	1/57.2

1/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

2/ Revised.



## Rye Stocks Up From '46 and '47

Rye stocks of 14.4 million bushels in all positions January 1 compare with 8.5 million same date last year, and 13.3 million bushels same date in '46. These stocks are bigger than in the last two years; but only a little over half as large as on same date in '45; and about a third those of January 1, '44.

## A Fourth Less Feed Grains

Stocks of feed grains—corn, oats, and barley—in all positions, January 1, totaled 61 million tons, smallest in any year since '37 and about a fourth under the large supply on hand a year earlier. Total stocks of these grains and stocks per grain consuming animal are both about 14 percent below the '38-42 average. Decrease mainly corn. Stocks of corn—in all positions—January 1 totaled 1,567 million bushels, 29 percent less than year earlier. Oats stocks, 790 million bushels, were down 15 percent from year earlier; barley, 188 million bushels, up 7 percent.

Sorghum grain stocks in all positions, January 1 totaled 45.5 million bushels...29 million on farms; 8.6 million at terminals; and 8 million at interior mills, elevators and warehouses. Sorghums are estimated in all positions for the first time.

## More Byproduct Feeds

More byproduct feeds will be on hand for remainder of '47-48 feeding season ending September 30 than average for past few years. They probably will be less, however, than in same months of '46-47 when total supplies were largest on record. Much of the drop from last season will result from a decline in byproduct feeds from grain-processing. Production of oilseed cake and meal is expected to exceed that of '46-47. Total production of byproduct feeds in '47-48 may be smaller than in '46-47, though a larger part of the total feed concentrate supply.

## More Soybean Stocks on Farms; Fewer All Told

Over 141 million bushels of soybeans were stored in all positions on January 1. Nearly 49 million bushels were at processing plants. Over 13 million bushels were commercial stocks at terminals. About 28.5 million bushels were in interior mills, elevators and warehouses. And nearly 51 million bushels remained on farms. Farm stocks were much larger than on January 1 in the past 3 years. Processors stocks were slightly larger than usual. But those in other off-farm positions were relatively small. Soybean stocks, all told, were 9 percent less than a year ago and the smallest in 6 years.

Disappearance...October-December, 1947...is indicated at 45.3 million bushels. In that quarter about 41,317,000 bushels were processed for oil. Same quarter of '46, disappearance was about 50.4 million bushels, of which 41,652,000 bushels were processed for oil. Except in '46, both disappearance and quantity processed were larger in the recent October-December quarter than in the same quarter of any other year.

## Honey and Beeswax Production

Honey production in 1947 totaled 228,162,000 lbs.—7 percent larger than the '46 crop and 13 percent above the '41-45 average. Mid-December stocks of honey on hand for sale totaled 62,408,000 lbs. compared with 10,787,000 lbs. a year earlier. Beeswax production totaled 4,492,000 lbs. in 1947, about 3 percent larger than in '46. Honey left in the hive for winter stores averaged 41.4 lbs. per colony compared with 37.1 lbs. for the '46-47 winter feeding season. The 1947 honey crop was produced by 5,910,000 colonies of bees.

## Flaxseed Stocks Nearly 28 Million Bushels

Stocks of flaxseed in all positions, January 1, totaled 27,890,000 bushels. Of this total 10,530,000 bushels were on farms. Of the 17,360,000 bushels in off-farm positions, 7,235,000 bushels were commercial stocks at terminals with the remainder in processing plants, interior elevators and warehouses. Of the farm stocks, 93 percent of the total were in 3 States, Minnesota, North and South Dakota. Of the off-farm stocks, nearly 66 percent were in Minnesota, with an additional 14 percent in North and South Dakota.

## Farmers to Grow Less Tobacco

Most tobacco farmers will grow less tobacco this year than last...quotas and acreage allotments are less owing to larger supplies on hand and poorer prospects for exports. Net reductions from last year in acreage allotted: flue-cured, 27 percent; burley, 7 percent; fire-cured, 35 percent; dark air-cured, 25 percent. Others are non-quota. But suggested goals call for some decrease in type 32 (Maryland), and for no change in Virginia sun-cured and most cigar types. Some increases were suggested for Ohio filler and Georgia-Florida wrapper.

Tobacco products produced in the U. S. will be about as large or larger than in '47 but exports—slowed by dollar shortage abroad—likely will fall below last year when they were a

fourth less than in '46 and 35 percent below the record year of '19.

## More Meat Produced Last Year

Meat produced under Federal inspection in '47—dressed weight 18,595 million pounds—was 19 percent more than in '46. Biggest increase was in beef, up 33 percent. Pork and lamb increased 11 percent. Lamb and mutton show a 15 percent decrease. Total meat production, including farm, tentatively estimated at 23.3 billion pounds in 1947; 23.0 billion pounds produced in 1946. Inspected slaughterers increased output sharply in 1947 but noninspected output fell. During the war and in 1946 an unusually larger proportion was slaughtered outside of Federal inspection.

## Big Increase in Tung Nuts

Tung nut production increased from 1,160 tons in 1939 to a record high of 57,400 tons in 1946. The '41-46 average is 25,410 tons. In 1939, growers received \$49,000 for the tung nut crop and in 1946 a record high of \$5,564,000. The price per ton received by growers has varied from \$42.20 in 1939 to the record high price of \$102.00 in 1944. Tung nuts are produced in a belt about 100 miles wide along the Gulf of Mexico in the 6 States of Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. Two-fifths of production comes from Mississippi...Very little as yet from Texas.

## Farmers' Prices—Paid and Received

Prices paid by farmers rose 2.4 percent while prices received rose only 2 percent, mid-December to mid-January. Farmers paid more for feed and food bought, also more for taxes and interest. Taxes cost more partly because real estate valuations are higher.

## More Production Now Per Farm Worker

Back in 1820, each farm worker produced enough farm products to support himself and only 3 other persons. In 1920... enough for himself and 9 others. In 1945...enough for himself and more than 13 others. In 1945, each man-hour of farm labor meant 44 percent more gross production than in 1917-21. Half of these savings in hours of work per unit of product resulted from use of labor-saving farm machines; the other half came from use of better seed and other improvements in farming, mainly increases in crop and livestock yields. Today an hour of labor on the farm produces about a third more milk, one-half more corn, and more than twice as much wheat as in 1920.

A rough estimate has been made of the farm manpower saved in a year: But for more and better farm power, machines, and production practices than those used in 1917-21, about 4.5 million additional workers would have been needed on farms in 1944 to produce the large volume of farm products of that year—a year when a great deal of manpower was needed for war. (See recent BAE Study, "Progress of Farm Mechanization," Misc. Pub. No. 630.)

## Farm Labor Off; All Labor Up From Year Ago

2 percent fewer persons were at work on farms February 1 than a year ago. Main cause, severe winter weather. Decrease mostly hired workers. Hired totaled 1.5 million—7 percent under number employed year ago. All civilians employed in January (Census) 57.1 million; 55.4 million same month in '47; 51 million in '46.

## CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	January 1948
Prices received by farmers .....	1910-14= 100	307
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes .....	1910-14= 100	251
Parity ratio .....	1910-14= 100	122
Wholesale prices of food .....	1910-14= 100	281
Retail prices of food .....	1910-14= 100	1/ 207
Farm wage rates .....	1910-14= 100	408
Weekly factory earnings .....	1910-14= 100	2/ 457
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Full Year 1946	Full Year 1947
Milk, (Bil. lb.) .....	119.7	120.2
Eggs, (Bil.) .....	55.6	55.5
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) * .....	5,666	7,535
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) * .....	850	717
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.) * .....	8,490	9,439
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) * .....	15,649	18,595

\* Federally Inspected Only.

1/ December figure. 2/ Factory payroll per employed worker adjusted for seasonal variation. November figure.